

**MINUTES OF THE GREENSBORO HISTORIC
PRESERVATION COMMISSION
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MELVIN MUNICIPAL OFFICE BUILDING
JANUARY 25, 2005**

MEMBERS PRESENT: COLEMAN, HATFIELD (ARRIVED AT 4:13), HENSLEY, KELLY, STOUT AND WHARTON.

STAFF PRESENT: STEFAN-LEIH GEARY, Housing and Community Development (HCD) and Mike Williams, City Attorney's Office

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Bowers called the meeting to order at 4:06 and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA:

None.

INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURES:

Chair Bowers explained the policies and procedures of the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission.

STAFF AND SPEAKERS SWORN OR AFFIRMED:

All persons who intended to speak at the meeting, as well as staff, were affirmed. Chair Bowers stated that if anyone else decided to speak later, they would be affirmed at that time.

Commissioners confirmed that they had received their packets in a timely manner; no Commissioner had a conflict of interest with regard to any item on the agenda; no Commissioner had discussed any application prior to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF ABSENCES:

The absence of Commissioners Freyaldenhoven and Ayscue were approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 30, 2005:

Mr. Stout moved approval of the November 30, 2005 minutes as corrected, seconded by Ms. Coleman. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS (PUBLIC HEARING)

A. Application No.: 734

Location: 801 Simpson Street

Applicant: Daintry O'Brien and Tom Peters (CONDITIONALLY GRANTED)

Description of Work

Construction of a second story room over the existing sunroom on the side elevation, the expansion of an existing addition on the rear elevation, and the removal of a non-original window on the rear elevation to allow a closet to become a bathroom.

Note: Because the house is on a corner lot the addition will also require a Special Exception to the zoning ordinance. The house is within the 15' setback from the property line (or 40' from the street

centerline, whichever is greater'). Because the historic districts were developed before zoning rules were established, it is often difficult to meet current setback rules in the historic districts. Therefore a provision was included in the ordinance that allows relief from the rules as long as the intent of the historic district guidelines is met: "All street setback (except as provided in subsection 1) above), interior setback, building coverage, and height requirements shall comply with applicable zoning regulations unless a special exception is approved by the Board of Adjustment. The special exception shall be granted only if it complies with the intent of the architectural and historic guidelines of the historic district and if first recommended by the Historic Preservation Commission."

Based on information contained in the application, the staff recommends in favor of granting this Certificate of Appropriateness and that the commission recommend in favor of a Special Exception to the zoning setback requirements. In the staff's opinion the proposed project is congruous with the *Historic District Design Guidelines—Additions (page 76)* and *Windows and Doors (page 55)* for the following reasons:

Fact

The proposed addition and alterations will allow the new homeowners to expand bathroom and other living spaces. As was the case with most houses in the historic districts, spaces in this house, especially kitchen and bathrooms, were originally very small by modern standards. What the applicant is proposing is typical of changes that have been made to most houses in the historic district over the years. Additions and other home improvements have sought to provide additional space to meet the practical needs of growing families and changing lifestyles.

From the Introduction to the Guidelines (page 3)

"Greensboro's approach is based on the premise that the Historic District neighborhoods can and should be growing, vital, and vibrant places to live, work, and congregate. This philosophy is crucial to the future of Greensboro's Historic Districts and is outlined in this section. This philosophy is the underlying principle that must be relied on in the interpretation and application of the guidelines.... The guidelines have been written to maintain the historic integrity of the original architecture of the buildings in the Historic Districts while allowing for flexibility in accommodating the growing needs of families, tenants, churches, schools, and businesses. The Design Guidelines recognize the practical issues involved in adapting historic buildings to modern lifestyles and strives to achieve a balance between function and preservation. The guidelines allow for change when it is accomplished in a sensitive manner that maintains the special character of the Historic District, while meeting the practical needs of the residents and property owners."

Fact

The proposed alterations will be to side and rear elevations. The general pattern and arrangement of original windows, doors and other features of the house will be maintained.

Guideline #1 (page 57)

"Retain and preserve the pattern, arrangement, and dimensions of window and door openings on principal elevations. Often the placement of windows is an indicator of a particular architectural style, and therefore contributes to the building's significance. If necessary for technical reasons, locate new window or door openings on secondary elevations, and introduce units that are compatible in proportion, location, shape, pattern, size, materials, and details to existing units."

Fact

The proposed rear alteration is an expansion of an earlier addition that will increase the footprint of the structure very little and will not affect trees or site features. The back yard has been landscaped very attractively and appropriately for the historic district. The additions will have little impact on existing landscaping.

Guideline #6 (page 76)

"Minimize site disturbance for construction of additions to reduce the possibility of destroying site features and/or existing trees."

From the section introduction: *"Additions that radically change the proportion of built area to green area on the site are not appropriate."*

Fact

The additions will be distinguishable from the original structure through change in roof form, wall plane, and exterior materials. The house is currently sided in aluminum siding. However, the project proposes to use Hardi Plank™ (fiber cement) siding to match the dimensions of the original wood siding on the house, which can be seen on the interior side porch at an 8 inch reveal. New windows will be wood, double-hung, simulated divided light windows to match the design and dimensions of original windows on the house. Roofing shingles, foundation brick, paint colors, and other details will match the existing materials.

Guideline #1 (page 76)

"In terms of material, style, and detail, design additions to be compatible with the original structure rather than duplicating it exactly."

Guideline #2 (page 76)

"Distinguish additions from the original structure through change in roofline, wall plane, detailing, and/or material."

Fact

The additions will not interfere with the front elevation or require the removal of any architectural features on the front elevation. The addition to the second level side elevation will be set back from the original wall plane of the front elevation lessening the impact on the front elevation.

Guideline #3 (page 76)

"Locate, design and construct additions so that the character-defining features of the historic structure are not obscured, destroyed, damaged, or radically changed."

Fact

The proposed addition and expansion are small and there is no indication that if built as designed that they will overpower the original massing of the structure.

Guideline #4 (page 76)

"Limit the size and scale of additions, so that the integrity of the original structure is not compromised."

Fact

The side addition is lower than the adjacent roof where it is adjoining the original house and will not alter the original roof line or form. The rear expansion is to an existing addition and any alterations to that roof line will therefore not affect the original roof.

Guideline #5 (page 76)

"Changes in height that alter the character and scale of the existing building to accommodate an addition are not appropriate."

In Support:

David Schub, 211 W. Bessemer Avenue – Fisher Park Association
 Tom Peters, 1202 Grayland Street
 Daintry O'Brien, 1202 Grayland Street
 John Linn, 6414 Woodmont Road, Jamestown, NC ~ Architect

In Opposition:

None.

Summary:

Chair Bowers said this is Application 734, for work at 801 Simpson Street. The description of the work is for construction of an addition and alterations to the house. Staff and the Design Review Committee have reviewed the application and recommends in favor of the application as they feel it is congruent with the guidelines for additions as stated in the staff report. Representing the Fisher Park Association, David Schub, stated that they were in favor of the project with conditions. John Linn, architect, explained the proposed project and answered questions. The applicants also answered questions by the Commission members and it was determined that the original structure would not be impacted by the addition and alterations. It was determined that the original windows would be used in other parts of the house and not in the new addition. No trees will be harmed during the construction and the house will be re-roofed and that portion of the project will be handled at staff level. There was no one speaking in opposition to the proposed project.

Discussion:

Ms. Hatfield stated that she feels this is a good plan as they are considering the location and plan to use the original windows in other parts of the house. Using the hardi-plank is a sufficient use showing that this is an addition to the house. Mr. Stout also felt that the plan is a good one and will not have a detrimental impact on the neighborhood.

Findings of Fact and Motion:

Mr. Stout moved that the findings of fact presented by staff be addressed and finds that the proposed project is congruous with the historic district program manual and design guidelines and that staff comments be incorporated. He moved that the Certificate of Appropriateness be granted with the following conditions: the original windows be used where they can be used in other locations in the house, a tree protection plan be put in place for the project and that the applicants be able to use either 2 or 3 windows at the rear on the new addition, seconded by Mr. Wharton. The Commission voted 7-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Bowers, Coleman, Hatfield, Hensley, Kelly, Stout and Wharton. Nays. None.)

Motion for Special Exception:

Mr. Stout moved that a Special Exception be recommended to the Board of Adjustment for this project as stated in staff information, seconded by Ms. Hensley. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

CONSIDERATION OF NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION FOR 201 N. ELM STREET (WACHOVIA BUILDING)

Stefan-Leih stated that there has been a nomination for 201 N. Elm Street from the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources for the Wachovia Building. The North Carolina Advisory Committee will consider the nomination at their February meeting. The Wachovia Building meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria in the area of architecture. It was completed in 1966 but this building is significant of a corporate modern skyscraper and is a symbol of technological progress, corporate presence and urban sophistication. It is one of nine skyscrapers that were constructed in the entire state.

The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the nomination.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION CHAIRMAN:

None.

ITEMS FROM HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT:

Stefan-Leih stated that information has been received that work on a project at 211 N. Park Drive is not being done consistent with the original Certificate of Appropriateness that was issued for that project. It was determined that staff and the Design Review Committee would visit the site and make a determination on this project. It was also mentioned that staff would notify the property owner that a site visit would be made. Mr. Stout moved that seconded by Ms. Hensley. The Commission voted 7-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Bowers, Coleman, Hatfield, Hensley, Kelly, Stout and Wharton. Nays. None.)

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be held on February 22, 2006 at 4:00 p.m.

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There being no other business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 5:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Cowhig, Executive Secretary
Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission

MC/jd